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INFORMATION REPORT

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. On 6 November 1952, a conference was held, on short notice, by the SED Central Committee. It was attended by all SED district secretaries and the editors-in-chief of the largest dailies in East Germany. The conference was said to have been convened following a sharp reprimand given to Walter Ulbricht by the former Politburo for the SED political line.

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- a) "The national question is still the center of our policy. The over-emphasis on all problems related to the building of socialism is mainly the fault of the press which has neglected the national question. At the present moment, the importance of the struggle for the unification of Germany must be stressed because the national question has priority over social problems." 2
- b) "Regarding the question of production cooperatives, Ulbricht made reference to the growing bitterness of the class struggle in the country. Grave mistakes have been made in recent months. The organization of production cooperatives has been forcibly pushed and the principle of voluntary participation violated. Grave psychological mistakes were made. However, this does not mean that the party will give up its original objectives in the matter of production cooperatives. Thus for instance, the incidents which occurred at Seelow will be dealt with by the Supreme Court in the light of the intensification of class struggle in villages. 3 But from this, it must not be deduced that all the large farmers are out to be wiped out as a class. Such action must be taken on an individual basis and only after the law of the country has been violated."
- c) "Several criticisms were made of Ulbricht on the weak evaluation given by the press to the 14th Party Congress in Moscow. Editorial staffs did not pay sufficient attention to the debates held at the congress. This resulted in an obscure and misleading rendering of proceedings."

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For instance, several newspapers distorted the statement "The bourgeoisie threw the banner of freedom overboard" by replacing the word "bourgeoisie" with the word "capitalism". This showed a complete misunderstanding. Walter Ulbricht cited several examples proving that the editors did not understand the speeches held at the 19th Party Congress. Such misunderstanding must be cleared up in the newspaper offices and the people must be correctly informed. 5

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2. Comment. This statement is in line with the intention of the Krenlin to play down, at the moment, the Sovietization of East Germany and to stress national slogans instead. This is believed to be a more effective policy in preventing a ratification of the Bonn Treaty and in keeping alive the desire for a unification of Germany.

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4. Comment. The information pertaining to a more prudent policy regarding the collectivization of farming is confirmed. It is believed that the difficulties experienced with respect to food supplies may have contributed to this modified attitude. However, there are indications that the fundamental course of the agrarian policy will not be changed.

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5. Comment. The most noteworthy feature of the report is the degree to which the East German press is blamed for the mistakes made by the SED Party leadership, mistakes which were severely criticized in Moscow.

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